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ABSTRACT

During the summer of 1995 a group of educators in Milwaukee (Wisconsin) created an innovative program, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) Summer Institute on Nonviolence, to help young people learn alternatives to violent behavior. The program was designed to train peer leaders in nonviolence so they could return to their schools and communities to promote peace and nonviolence. The program's curriculum and pedagogical techniques were based on current research about the best ways to deal with youth violence. Of the 16 student participants, 11 were female and 5 were male. Nine were African American, one was Asian American, one was Hispanic American, and four were Caucasian. A variety of quantitative and qualitative research techniques, including feedback from the participants and their parents, were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the summer program. Student and parent responses indicated that the participants were interested in the program's ideas and learned about ways to prevent violence. In follow up meetings, students indicated that they were functioning as peer leaders in their own environments, working to promote peace and nonviolence. The first year of this program was successful within the context of its stated goals. (Contains 3 tables and 22 references.) (SLD)

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ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UWM SUMMER INSTITUTE ON NONVIOLENCE

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ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UWM SUMMER INSTITUTE ON NONVIOLENCE

NONVIOLENCE

As I sit here,
I try to hold back a tear.
A tear that cries of pain,
Hoping to regain,
some of its joy.

The picture of violence once so coy,
is saying to us now,
"I'm not a toy!"

I'm thinking now,
and I'm wondering how?
How violence can ruin so much,
and it's not afraid to touch.

It has touched my life,
and cut like a knife.

I made a promise to me,
because I've seen all I need to see.

I'm living my life violence free!

Casey[1]

written during the University of Wisconsin (UWM) Summer Institute on Nonviolence

Violence is increasingly becoming a problem for young people. Suicides and gun-related homicides are at record high levels (U.S. Department of Justice, 1994). Studies show that violence is changing the behavior of teenagers. The specters of crime and violence are scaring America's young people into carrying weapons, cutting classes and settling for lower grades (Louis Harris and Associates, 1995). Although this is a nationwide problem, the fears of violence exist more heavily in inner city at risk neighborhoods:

> Almost half of all students have changed their behaviors as a result of crime or the threat of crime. One in five have avoided particular parks or playgrounds, one in eight have carried weapons to protect themselves or have gotten lower grades in school than they think they otherwise would have, and one in nine have stayed home from school or cut class. Students in at risk neighborhoods are more than twice as likely to avoid particular parks, three times as likely to have gotten lower grades, and four times as likely to say they have carried weapons or stayed home from school or cut class. (Louis Harris and Associates, p. 10)

In spite of the damaging effects of violence upon young children, educators have mostly ignored these problems and continue to blame school failure on inadequate instruction or curricula (Harris, 1995).

Early adolescence presents a vital opportunity for shaping behavior patterns that can set a young person on a successful course for life. However, many youth at that age are engaging in antisocial activities and violence. They have not learned how to handle conflict without resorting to violence. In 1993, in the Milwaukee area alone, 363 children under the

age of 18 were either injured or killed by guns, 105 juveniles were arrested for murder, 1400 were arrested for battery, 610 for weapons offense and 423 for narcotics offenses.

During the summer of 1995 a group of educators in Milwaukee, Wisconsin created an innovative program, the UWM Summer Institute on Nonviolence, to help young people learn alternatives to violent behavior. The organizers of this Institute hoped to train peer leaders in nonviolence so they would have a positive effect upon the wider population of young people exposed to violence. Once these youth were trained in nonviolent theory and practice, it was hoped that they would return to their schools and communities using the skills they learned during the Summer Institute to promote peace and nonviolence. They would form what Gandhi called a "shenti sena," or nonviolent brigade in the midst of a youth culture steeped in violence. Such a brigade would have a positive influence upon the violent behavior of others by modeling peace and instructing others in nonviolent ways to resolve disputes.

The goals of the Summer Institute on Nonviolence were to provide a fun, inviting place to learn about peace and appreciate the richness of nonviolence, to use cooperative games, and to create an opportunity for young people to communicate concerns about violence with peers and adults. This paper will evaluate how well the UWM Summer Institute on Nonviolence met its goals. After a literature review on the model used in Milwaukee, the Institute itself will be described. The methodology and discussion section will explain the design of this evaluation and provide both quantitative and qualitative data about the effectiveness of the Institute. Finally, the conclusion will assess strengths and weakness of this model as a strategy for helping young people in high risk areas deal constructively with violence.

Identifying Nonviolence

According to the concluding report of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, adolescence, when young people are making decisions that involve education, drugs, weapons, and how they use their bodies, is the decisive time to offer training which capitalizes on their emerging cognitive capabilities. The report states:

> Life skills training (which includes skills in nonviolent conflict resolution and assertiveness training) should become a vital part of education in all relevant institutions, so that adolescents learn to make informed, deliberate, and constructive decisions. One such life skill that adolescents often lack and that can be taught is the ability to pursue constructive (rather than destructive) relations with others. (1995, p.55)

Adolescents are primarily concerned with their emerging self-identity juxtaposed against that of their peers. Peer pressure is a phenomenon that adds tremendous stress on this group. Peers can influence their friends to behave in destructive or constructive ways.

The Carnegie report calls for youth to be trained with skills in assertiveness and nonviolent conflict resolution, and identify these as being of utmost value:

> An aspect of assertiveness is knowing how to resist pressure or intimidation to use drugs or weapons or have sex--without disrupting valued relationships or isolating oneself. Yet another aspect is nonviolent conflict resolution--the ability to achieve personal and social goals in ways that make use of the many nonviolent opportunities that exist in the society. (1995, p. 55)

If sustained over a period of years, the report concludes, such interventions can offset the negative effects of low self-respect, undeveloped social and decision-making skills, indifference to education, low perception of opportunities, and limited incentive for delaying short-term gratification.

Peace educators attempt to educate young people about the problems of violence and teach them about alternatives to violence (Harris, 1988). Peace theory has three levels that can be applied to educational attempts to provide youth for strategies for dealing constructively with violence (Harris, in press). Most educators rely on peacemaking strategies which use threats to deter young people from violence. The model used at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee rests specifically upon peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies for youth. In the peacekeeping category the participants were taught anger management skills, interpersonal conflict management techniques, and nonviolent dating patterns. Peacebuilding tries to create in the minds of pupils a desire to pursue nonviolence. Studies have show the value of teaching adolescents nonviolence (Earls, Cairns, & Mercy, 1993). Curwin calls directly for teaching alternatives to violence:

> *Teach Youth Alternatives to Violence*: Students behave violently to express anger or frustration, to show off, to protect themselves. Throughout their lives, children have learned how to express their feelings by observing their parents and teachers, as well as the Power Rangers, Roseanne, The Simpsons, and Beavis and Butt-Head. The more tools students have to choose from to meet their needs and to express their feelings, the greater the likelihood they will use them. (1995, p. 73) Teaching young adolescents about nonviolence can help

offset some of the destructive methods of dealing with conflict that they learn from the media, their families, their neighborhoods, and their schools.

Although research dealing with young people and violence supports teaching youth alternatives to violence as a way of preventing youth violence (Noguero, 1995), there has not been much research on the effectiveness of peace education efforts. Studies on young children have shown that teaching young people peaceful ways to respond to conflict can help lay an important foundation for helping them become more peaceful as adults (Bernat, 1993; Carlsson-Paige & Levin, 1985). Research on college students has shown that they can experience a change in value orientation as a result of peace education classes (Eckhardt, 1984). Other studies have demonstrated cognitive changes as a result of peace education efforts (Feltman, 1987; French, 1984; Lyou, 1987). Harris (1992) has shown that college students most often are most interested in changing their own behavior after such instruction, rather than trying to work on external circumstances that cause violence. Studies of peer mediation programs have shown that young people can learn peacekeeping skills in school and even apply these skills to their own lives (Johnson, Johnson, & Dudley, 1992). All these studies done in school and classroom settings lack longitudinal follow-ups to see how well the pupils in peace education classes have retained their learning about peace over time.

Studies on projects that have attempted to address the violence among teens have pointed to the need for collaboration between teachers, youth, and the community (Spergel, 1995). A report on one such project, PROJECT STOP - 1991-92 (Schools Teaching Options for Peace), shows that collaboration and cooperation are essential elements needed to support a successful venture. Project STOP provided :

a comprehensive package of conflict resolution, and information and techniques and helps participants resolve problems constructively rather than destructively. It encouraged ownership of the program, empowering individual students and parents to become competent problem-solvers with the ability to choose peaceful alternatives to violence. (1991, p. v)

Project STOP was a successful attempt to combine the talents of various established local and national organizations already adept in providing conflict resolution techniques. Its goals were met in part, because it targeted the "right" population, middle school students "who are caught in the struggle between peer group pressure and developing their own identities," and, in part, due to the unique collaboration between project coordinators, educators, schools, and local and national agencies.

The Summer Institute for Nonviolence at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee gave young adolescents an opportunity to spend some constructive time learning to be peacemakers during their summer vacations, when many young teens hang out with friends and get in trouble. Studies show that most young people are confused about violence and don't know what to do, but they also show a willingness on the part of youth to get involved in seeking a solution:

> Seven in ten (71%) teens say they are willing to participate in youth leadership programs, such as tutoring other kids or being a mentor to a younger student. Six in ten (62%) are willing to participate in anti-violence or anti-drug programs, or programs to teach skills on how to avoid fights, sometimes called "conflict resolution programs." (Louis Harris and Associates, 1995. p. 14)

The UWM Summer Institute encouraged young adolescents to get involved in solving some of the problems of youth violence by having each student develop an action plan.

The Summer Institute hired youth workers so that the participants could learn from peers and other students about their perceptions of violence. Studies show that youth often look to each other for guidance on how to deal with difficult problems:

> · Some of the most positive and compelling models for young people are older students. Students can be trained to share their wisdom with classrooms of young kids, or to mentor younger kids in one-on-one situations. Older students usually know the plight of younger students better than anyone else. (Leighninger & Niedergang, 1994, p. 18)

The didactic format of the Institute allowed the participants to learn from adult role models about nonviolent behavior, to study alternatives to violence in small groups, to share with their peers concerns about violence, and to brainstorm solutions to conflicts in their own lives. The curriculum and pedagogical techniques used in the UWM Summer Institute on Nonviolence are based upon current research findings about best practices to deal with the troublesome phenomenon of youth violence.

UWM Summer Institute For Nonviolence

Creation of the Institute

The Coalition for Nonviolence in Schools (CNS) was founded in 1991, as an outgrowth of the Southeastern Wisconsin chapter of Wisconsin Educators for Social Responsibility (WESR). This Midwest chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility has been

promoting peace education in the schools in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin metropolitan area since the early 1980s. During the decade of the 1980s most of its work consisted of annual conferences focusing on the threat of nuclear weapons. With the collapse of the cold war, educators and parents were looking for new ways to address internal threats of violence. CNS was formed because of their belief that one of the reasons for the increase in youth violence is that young people are not taught nonviolence. To counteract the violence of television programs, movies, and society in general, this multiracial coalition decided to advocate the teaching of nonviolence and conflict resolution in schools in Southeastern Wisconsin. This coalition consists of concerned citizens, parents, educators, community groups, and peace organizations that seek to provide nonviolent alternatives in educational settings. It promotes peaceful human relations, urges adults to teach reverence for life, and encourages students to seek nonviolent means to resolve conflicts.

Public schools in Milwaukee have an exciting tradition of peace education, having adopted ten years ago a peace education curriculum that is currently been revised to reflect the realities of a post cold war era. CNS has worked closely with local schools to monitor their peace education efforts. The Coalition has held numerous conferences and peace fairs to inform educational professionals about nonviolence in education. In 1993 after hosting a conference on nonviolence in education at the University of Wisconsin,[2] members of the coalition decided that they wanted to continue their efforts on teaching young people about nonviolence.

CNS's role in the UWM Summer Institute began during the summer of 1994 when it was able to raise enough money to send an inner city high school junior from Milwaukee to

the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Change in Atlanta, GA for one week of nonviolence education. This young man later returned as staff for the 1995 UWM Summer Institute for Nonviolence. During the trip to Atlanta he collaborated with a former beat patrolman for the Milwaukee Police Department, who currently works as a full time violence prevention coordinator for the Milwaukee Health Department. The violence prevention coordinator recruited two high school students and one college student who participated as youth workers for the institute. All of these staff members are African-Americans.

The other staff members are Caucasians. They consisted of a school psychologist, a substitute teacher, a middle school English teacher and a violence prevention coordinator from the Milwaukee Public Schools; the director of Peace Studies and a graduate student in peace education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a middle school teacher from Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, a rural school district; and a violence prevention expert from the Task Force on Battered Women. With the exception of the four youth workers (three of whom were on summer work money provided by the city and one who was paid by Friends of Peace Studies), none of these staff were paid. All volunteered their time to develop a model that might provide an answer for some of the problems of youth violence which are so prevalent in metropolitan areas in the United States.

This staff brought considerable expertise to the Summer Institute. A wide variety of anger management techniques were presented, while others counseled students who had deep concerns related to violence. Young people's concerns about violence in peer relations and nonviolent dating contract were also addressed.[3] Staff members kept the focus on the institute

curriculum and the needs of the participants, and the gravity of the topic was balanced with a wide variety of fun songs and activities.

Special guests appeared throughout the institute to provide various areas of expertise in violence prevention. A Latino ex-gang member from Chicago, who works in the field of gang prevention, was hired as a consultant to provide young people inspiration on how to avoid pressure to join gangs. Experts in the field of nonviolence in the Milwaukee area volunteering to teach included the director of special education for the Milwaukee Public Schools and a staff member from the Jobs with Peace organization. On the last day of the Institute staff and students were treated to a surprise appearance by two Jain monks from India who had just arrived in the Midwest and were in the process of establishing a center for nonviolence in Milwaukee. They taught the youth about relaxation techniques and provided insights about how to live a nonviolent life.

The Institute ran on a very low budget of $2500 which was raised by Friends of Peace Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. T-shirts were given to each of the young people who completed the institute, and The Archdiocese of Milwaukee donated $1000 that helped pay for bus passes and lunches for the participants. Because of these donations, the Institute was free for the participants.

Curriculum of the Institute

The Institute curriculum was developed during the summer of 1995 through a collaborative effort of the volunteer staff and the youth workers. It followed an adult education model (Richardson, 1979) where the problems of violence were presented first,

solutions were generated next, and finally participants were asked to develop action plans in which each participant identified what he or she wanted to accomplish, steps to reach their goals, things that might get in the way, and ideas to overcome any difficulties. They each had the opportunity to choose a mentor from the pool of facilitators and community activists which were involved with the Institute to assist them periodically through the year with their plans.

In order to motivate them to pursue peace, the participants were told stories about local and international peace heroes (like the Nobel Peace Prize winners). They received instruction about alternatives to destructive behaviors, and they were urged to become peacemakers themselves. During the week staff addressed issues of violence and nonviolence; participants focused on personal nonviolence; guest speakers talked about community violence; young people discussed ways that they could become peacemakers and presented action plans. The overall goal of the institute was to increase the awareness and utilization of nonviolence and encourage leadership in youth.

On the first day students established a peace treaty[4] that set rules for how they should behave and learned about the impact of violence and nonviolence in their lives. During the second day they focussed on problems of violence in their own lives, dating abuse and anger management. The third day allowed the teenagers to learn about various nonviolent heroes and about international problems of war and peace. Since the Institute was held during the fiftieth year commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, special attention was placed upon the atomic bombings of Japan. On the fourth and fifth day, they developed

action plans to implement ideas they had learned in their own schools, homes, churches, and neighborhoods.

The UWM Summer Institute for Nonviolence took place on the campus of a large urban university. Part of the design of the program was to help these youth become comfortable with being on a college campus, hoping that would help motivate them to pursue higher education themselves. During the week they were given opportunities to be exposed to different aspects of student life. They were greeted the first day by the Dean of School of Education. They ate lunch in the student union, and during the last day went swimming in the university pool. Twice each day the participants were given quiet time to write in journals. The journals were collected daily and each facilitator had the opportunity to correspond with the participants, which provided a map to each days successes and a way to correct any failures which may have occurred along the way. These journals provide an opportunity for staff to communicate privately with the participants. The journals also provided the staff and research team sixteen additional pairs of eyes to witness and record how the institute was impacting their immediate existence. While they were free to write anything at anytime, the following questions were suggested as guides to get them started: What do you think you learned today? What surprised you? What concerned you? What confused you? What was the key point for you? What questions do you have?

Participants of the Institute

The youth who attended the Summer Institute were recruited from area middle schools via the Pre-College Center at UWM which offers a variety of programs to enhance the

current and future academic performance of high school and middle school students. Admission was based upon 7th, 8th and 9th grade status, GPA, teacher recommendation, and general application information which are standard requirements for any Pre-college program. In addition to the standard application, a peace essay which was completed by 95% of the applicants was required prior to attending the Institute. These essays yielded valuable information regarding what each expected of the Institute.

Pre-surveys of participants' interests indicated that they wanted to learn how to manage conflicts in their own lives. The planning process was enhanced by a pre institute meeting which included the participants and their parents. This provided the facilitators with the opportunity to interact with the parents in the company of their children. At this time, the goals and objectives of the Institute were explained, and the parents and participants were given the opportunity to vocalize their desires for institute outcomes. Almost half (45%) of the responses for suggestions regarding the institute were concerned with interpersonal skill building in the form of more effective communication strategies and anger management skills. Some participants wanted to "learn useful ways to solve problems in a nonviolent way" and "get help to not become offensive or ready to fight in tense situations." Other suggestions involved community based activities which were later incorporated into the participants' action plans in which each participant provided a written commitment to demonstrate the principles of nonviolence.

The profile of the sixteen "essential young people" who came together to spend a week of their summer vacation to study nonviolence is as varied and enigmatic as the teens themselves. Of the sixteen total participants 11 were female (69%) and 5 were male (31%); 11

were from urban Milwaukee (69%), 2 were from suburban Milwaukee(12%), 2 were from rural Wisconsin, and 1 from Chile; 9 were African American (56%), 1 was Asian, 1 was Hispanic, and 4 were Caucasian (25%). Four participants had, at some time during their lives, witnessed violence with a gun. However, the over-generalized stereotypical descriptive data ends here. Each of the participants were individuals, who cared enough about themselves and their communities to volunteer to learn how they can better themselves and their surroundings.

Methodology and Discussion

A variety of quantitative and qualitative research techniques were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the UWM Summer Institute on Nonviolence. The quantitative techniques included an evaluation sheet to fill out at the end of the Institute and a pre- and posttest given to both the participants and their parents. In addition for this study, the qualitative techniques consisted of 1) analysis of each participant's interview and a journal which they kept daily during the institute; 2) analysis of an essay about nonviolence which each participant wrote upon the completion of the institute; 3) assessment of before and after peace essays written by each participant; and 4) focus group interviews with participants at the three post institute evaluation meetings to determine how well they have carried out their action plans. The methodology was designed to gauge the perspective of primarily each participant and secondarily their respective families, how the institute impacted their lives, as compared to its stated goals.

Tracking Peace in Progress: Quantitative Evaluation of Summer Institute

The quantitative aspects of this study will be divided into 3 parts--a summary of the Summer Institute evaluations, a comparison of participants responses to a questionnaire, and the results of a pre and post test instrument given to parents of the participants.

On the last day of the Institute all fifteen participants were given an evaluation sheet which contained eight stems and two open ended questions. The youth responded on a four point scale going from 4 = very much to 3 = quite a bit to 2 = not very much to 1 = a little. Data from the first seven questions are presented below in Table I:

TABLE I

STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF UWM SUMMER INSTITUTE

Stem		Average
a.	Was this Institute interesting?	3.26
b.	Do you feel ready to become a peacemaker?	3.64
c.	Was this Institute fun?	3.50
d.	Did you get to know other students?	3.50
e.	Did you learn about the effects of nonviolence?	3.63
f.	Did you learn to value peace?	3.73
g.	Did you enjoy being at UWM?	3.60

These evaluations show that the Institute met its goals which were to provide a fun inviting place to learn about peace and appreciate the richness of nonviolence.

Question eight asked participants if they would recommend this Institute to a friend. Eighty percent answered yes. The two youngest students who were in seventh grade responded no. The other seventh grader answered "don't know" to this stem and generally

responded negatively to the other stems, although she did write positive responses to the two open ended questions. This feedback has convinced the staff of the institute to not include seventh graders in future institutes. Talking about violence was depressing to these youth who were only 12. The topics were complex and at times confusing to these younger students. In the future young people aged 13 -15 will be invited to participate in the institute. Nonviolence is perhaps such a sophisticated concept that only the older, more mature students could comprehend and appreciate it.

The open-ended questions asked students what they liked and what they disliked about the Institute. The participants' favorite aspect was meeting peacemakers from the community. They also liked meeting new people and learning to value peace. Some of the participants found some of the speakers boring. Some mentioned they didn't like being talked at and would like more activity. They would like to see more games and activities, which might be expected among a population of early adolescents.

The participants. themselves were given an "Attitudes towards Violence and Nonviolence" questionnaire to fill out on the first and last days of the Summer Institute. This questionnaire was field tested for readability and reliability by the principal investigator for this project during the academic year 1994-1995 with a population of youth participating in a Stop the Violence program run by the Milwaukee Urban League. This instrument is located in Appendix A. The responses to it were noted on a five point scale going from 0 -4. Of the twenty stems on this instrument, eight of these produced statistically significant results, which are provided in Table II. Table II indicates that the staff of the Institute was successful in teaching young people to value peace. Respondents indicated that they had learned valuable

peacekeeping behaviors (A, C, D, E, and G). The decline in scores to "give in" (item B) could mean that they feel stronger in themselves and have a variety of ways of responding to conflict, rather than traditional "fight or flight" responses. The response to item C implies that the participants have learned to value an outside person, like a mediator, to help them resolve their conflicts. Responses to Item H indicate that after the Institute they are more concerned about levels of violence in their neighborhoods. One of the goals of the Institute was to heighten participants awareness of violence. Although some might question the value of an increase in responses to item F, this does indicate that these young people are finding ways other than getting angry or fighting to resolve their conflicts.

TABLE II

ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIOLENCE AND NONVIOLENCE*

Survey Item		Means@ Pre-Institute	Post Institute
A.	Turn conflict into a joke	.93	1.00
B.	Give in	1.00	.87
C.	Get an outside person to decide what is right	1.64	1.93
D.	Threaten the other person	1.07	.80
E.	Fight it out physically	.80	.73
F.	Whine or complain until you get your way	.60	.67
G.	Take the problem to peer mediation	1.57	1.86
H.	Do you worry about violence in your neighborhood?	1.62	1.92

* These responses are significant at the p = < .05 level
@ These means come from a five point scale:
0 = Not at all 1 = a little 2 = sometimes 3 = frequently 4 = all the time

The final quantitative instrument used in this evaluation is a parent questionnaire which was mailed to the parents and returned prior to the institute and mailed to them again six weeks after the institute had ended. Nine parents completed both of these questionnaires which can be found in Appendix B. Their responses are summarized in Table III. Although only four items on this 28 item questionnaire received responses at a statistically significant level, these responses indicate that the Institute met it goals. A larger sample might have produced even stronger results.

TABLE III

PARENTS' OBSERVATIONS OF CHILDREN*

Survey Item	Means@ Pre-Institute	Post Institute
Does you child have emotional outbursts?	1.20	1.00
Does your child take responsibility for his/her actions?	3.00	3.20
Does your child apply fairness rules (i.e., sharing)	2.78	2.89
Does your child keep out of fights?	3.10	3.30

* These scores are significant at the p = < .05 level
@ These means come from a five point scale
0 = not at all 1 = a little 2 = sometimes 3 = frequently 4 = all the time

Table III indicates the power of this type of intervention amongst eary adolescents. After one week's exposure to nonviolence, 56% of the parents reported that their children were behaving more peacefully.

Putting Peace in Motion: Qualitative Evaluation of Summer Institute

> Peace is being able to get along with people around you. This doesn't mean that people don't fight. It means that people can use the intellectual and rational way to solve problems. I think that peace is a very far goal to reach. It starts with every individual person and their state of mind. We can't just order for peace. And we can't just wish for it. We have to work for it and build up to it.
>
> Trish, Institute participant

Trish, along with many other Institute participants, wrote and discussed the ways they envisioned peace. Furthermore, they talked about humanity's role in the manifestation of peace, and as Trish wrote, how people put peace into motion. The students revealed their insights through pre- and post-institute essays about peace and nonviolence, journal entries and action plans, and interviews from participants allowed a more in depth analysis of the impact of the UWM Summer Institute upon the young adolescents who attended it. Before the Institute participants wrote essays as a segment of the application process. Many of the students were aware of nonviolence issues and had considered how violence in our world has affected or could affect their lives. During the Institute researcher observations were recorded that indicated a great deal of interest and enlightenment among the students. Most of the participants wrote action plans that they would begin during the school year after the Institute. These plans were based upon community involvement and geared toward their schools or churches. Some wanted to begin peer mediation programs in their schools while others wanted to start groups dedicated to supporting and spreading the message of

nonviolence either in their schools, church or neighborhood communities. Finally, post-essays and focus group interviews conducted after the Institute revealed the deep impact the Institute had among student's personal lives and their action plans (some revised and some already in progress or in-place) are affecting the families and communities of most all participants involved.

One major aim of the Institute was to cover a variety of topics and approaches about creating nonviolent environments. This was done by addressing the social and political roots of violence, exploring the many contexts in which violence occurs, and learning techniques to dismantle and neutralize violence. R. Craig Sautter cites the American Psychological Association as endorsing the most effective programs as ones that "address aggression as part of a constellation of antisocial behaviors, that their multiple components reinforce each other across the child's everyday social contexts: family, school, peer groups, media and community . . ." (p. K11, 1995). Because the participants entered the Institute from wide range of exposure to violence, their responses to peace making endeavors were multifaceted and highly contextual. They framed notions of peace in thematic categories of personal journeys, family edification, and community transformations. Students discussed their conceptualizations of peace prior to the Institute, and although most did not change the framework in which they viewed peace, they did increase their understanding of that framework and put into motion clear efforts of being peacemakers.

Personal Journeys

Taking individual responsibility for creating peace seems like a small effort in the global community of the 21st century. It is, however, the initial step needed to build a solid foundation for more encompassing work that creates nonviolent environments. Liz expressed this notion well in her discussion relating the importance of individual effort to global peacemaking:

> Peace is the sense of harmony between all people. It is also when everyone is on one accord. Peace is something that everyone must obtain. It is a joint effort. But in order to get peace, one must examine oneself.

Recognizing the futility in organizing groups and communities around peace themes without self examination was a part of Liz's understanding of peace before she even entered the Institute. She left the Institute with a strengthened sense of what it means to be a peacemaker and she acknowledge that she had learned "skills that I can use in my everyday life." She later discussed conflict that she experienced with the school bus driver that resulted in a near public confrontation with several members of her peer group. On a trip home from an afterschool event, the driver was speeding and causing several riders to bounce from their seats and hit their heads on the bus roof. Liz asked the driver to slow down twice without results, and although she and others were quite upset, she decided to remain calm and address the problem with the bus company. Rather than deal with the drivers negligence, the bus company made her aware that "inner city kids" were not authorized to ride the bus home after its normal run and that they would no longer be allowed to ride the bus if they had afterschool events. When the other riders heard the news, they were furious with Liz for

ruining their transportation home from extracurricular activities. There were rumors of retaliation from members of her group. Liz decided the best thing to do was approach the other students before the situation escalated, and she asked them to come to her individually and discuss the matter if they were upset rather than make a public display. Peacefully standing up for her rights against an act of violence almost caused another incident of unrest. Liz used the opportunity and her peacemaking skills to be an example to her peers and avoid the temptation to act in an unpeaceful way.

At one follow-up meeting, Sherry reported that while she has not been able to complete her goal of becoming a peer mediator due to school limitations and restrictions on who can and cannot be a peer mediator, she did acknowledge a change in her own behavior. She is specifically working on staying out of trouble. She states, "the school is unorganized and stuff...and they don't let new people in for peer mediation like if you weren't in peer mediation in your elementary school you won't be let in...because they don't have, like trainers for people who want to be in peer mediation...but I didn't get into any trouble though."

Some participants who have altered or changed their action plans in some way are quick to defend their actions. Roberta, a freshman, reports that even though she hasn't approached her student council about beginning a peer mediation program, she is also staying out of trouble and helping her friends to do the same:

> I'm giving advice like don't talk to them (referring to gangs) or disassociate yourself with them or try to get into some extracurricular activities. Slowly but surely they're getting out and I meet people who still smoke marijuana and

I make it sound ugly like, "Ooh, your eyes are going to turn yellow and nobody is gonna wanna talk to you," or like, "Ooh, what's wrong with his eyes? He's ugly when he does that." When I see people say no to something that makes me feel good. That makes me shine, makes me smile and so I feel better about that. So, though I haven't started a peer mediation thing, I think that I improve myself because I saved somebody.

Carrie, another participant who had intended to start a group, "a place to go instead of the streets," has revised her plan from forming a general group to helping individuals who she had previously been friends with but has stopped "hanging around with" because of their behavior and other incidents. She states, "some of the kids I thought were the good kids there, when they are around the whole group, they can act pretty bad and its like just forget it; I don't even want to associate with them anymore." In her nonviolence essay that she completed after the Institute she wrote:

Nonviolence means not doing drugs, drinking, or gang involvement. It also means not going with the flow of friends or society. What I mean is you can't be like someone else or imitate someone because we are all different. Like me, I have chosen to stay away from old friends that chose to smoke because it is not worth ruining my whole life for one dumb smoke. So, I feel not smoking, drinking, and so on are the best way to try to promote nonviolent ways.

Polly mentioned during a post-institute session that she has been staying out of trouble, which is a significant accomplishment for young people bombarded with messages encouraging sexual promiscuity, violent behaviors, and peer pressure to get involved in drugs

and gangs. Tina reported that she was not able to get involved in the mediation program at her school, because you had to start in the sixth grade, and she had just recently transferred to this school. She said, however, "I'm being my own nonviolent self."

Family Edification

Many participants used the Institute and its teachings as a method of dealing with family conflicts. Others used this experience as a way of sharing information with their families in hopes of enlightening them to new ways of thinking about other human beings. Sherry, Dan and Polly made it a point to let their parents know what went on during the day. Sherry noted, 'Yesterday when I went home I told my mother what had happened. I told her about when we came in how they were dancing and singing and playing instruments." Dan said, "After I left yesterday, I talked to my mom, uncle, and friend about all the different nationalities in this program. I also talked about the different things we did like listen to cultural music. I even talked about the teachers." Polly commented, "When I got home, I talked to my parents about what I learned. I talked about how we have to stop the violence that is going on."

Monica was very outspoken about society's ignorance about cultural and racial differences and how this ignorance often manifests itself in violent behavior. She used the forum as support for some of her decisions that are not so popular among her family members:

> I have black, white and brown friends. I do not care. You can be green or orange for all I care. I'll still love ya. Out there in the wild side there's black

and white molesters, killers, gang members, robbers, and sick, bad people. Some people think just because you're black, you're supposed to be evil and just because you're white, you're supposed to be pure and innocent. I don't believe that for a second. I have an African-American boyfriend. I can trust him. I guess I might be too young to say, but I love him. My whole family believes it's better to have boyfriends and girlfriends or to be married with your own heritage. And I don't believe that either. I've not disrespected my family, but I chose to be a black young man's girlfriend, and I do not see anything wrong with that. I'll probably start with my family to make them know that black people are not all bad or whites are not all good, and Hispanics are not all bad or good.

Several participants reported in the follow-up sessions that they had serious conflicts in their families that they were not able to resolve, although they had tried to use nonviolent conflict resolution methods. The adults explained that although nonviolence does provide some useful guidelines about how to resolve conflicts, it is not a panacea. Sometimes conflict resolution does not produce the desired results. Polly admitted that she had put forth a conscious effort to communicate more with her family and that this aspect of peacemaking has been most beneficial in her life.

Community Transformations

I think that peace is more than no fighting, no war and all that. It goes deeper. It's getting to know people around you and being aware so you don't need to

start something because you don't know about your surroundings. I think the only reason violence happens is because people have no clue what's going on around them. People need to feel comfortable in their surroundings. I feel we can have peace if we try to know people and what they believe about themselves and their surroundings. If we know this we might not need to hate each other.

Bonnie, Institute participant

Most participants' framing their idea of peace around community transformations ranged from events such as gang violence and neighborhood safety, to racism and economic disparity. Carrie believes that " if we can all do even a little to help our community, we can make a difference. If we treat each other with respect that could help stop the violence of racism." Casey's concern about the rapid transition of her neighborhood led her to respond when questioned about peace in this way, "Peace in my neighborhood would mean no more gang related deaths and living in hostile fear. Peace is being able to live with your brothers and sisters no matter what their ethnicity, sex or religion. Peace is being able to recognize the differences we all have and being able to respect them. Peace is about power."

Junior also expressed concern with racism as one of the biggest causes of violence in our communities. "Now that I have been through the program, I see violence as a sickness, and we all are being infected. The only thing that can cure it is unity." Junior left the Institute with an action plan that culminated in the resurgence of a Black Brothers Support Group at his school. With the support of his school guidance counselor the group has been very successful in encouraging young men to steer away from violent situations and position

themselves as role models in the school and larger community. Junior's work has placed him in a position of authority and he and Casey, who attend the same school, are now regarded as resources for sensible solutions to conflict whenever they arise at their school. The community wide ramifications of Junior's work have landed him on a local radio show to discuss his peacemaking endeavors. Additionally, Casey is writing scripts for a local teen forum show that talks to teens about the problems they face, including drugs, alcohol, violence, AIDS, and any other issues the teens want to talk about. The show encourages young people to be positive and gives them alternatives to destructive choices.

Carrie has taken it upon herself to contact an Institute presenter to come to her church and speak to her former friends about the realities of gang life. "I mean, I'm trying my best to help them with things like having effective speakers come talk. But mostly, I choose my friends more wisely. My grades are more important right now, not the things they do."

Other participants on track with their plans have taken steps toward their completion. Bonnie and Anna are working with a teacher in their school with a ropes course which encourages positive youth leadership. Dan was a leader on high school's basketball team. He reported that he has been "keeping the fellas out of trouble," which was a real accomplishment, because, according to the coach, the basketball team members had often played the role of bullies in the school.

Likewise, Liz had no programs at her school that promoted peacemaking, however, she is currently playing the role of a peacemaker in a play sponsored by several churches and other concerned citizens in the community. The play is free and open to the public and deals with the slave mentality of ignorance and the "quite violence" of not acquiring an education.

After several local performances, they will take the play on the road to make state wide appearances. Also since the institute, Monica has become involved with a Positive Youth Development group (PYD) and has traveled to conferences and workshops with them. She, in collaboration with a student staff member connected with the Milwaukee Health Department, has applied for and received a grant to conduct a mini-institute (based upon the summer institute) for 100 students from surrounding schools in the community to be completed during the winter/spring semester.

Since the overall goal of the Institute was to increase the awareness and utilization of nonviolence and encourage leadership in youth, its success is substantial. Each of the participants who have maintained contact with the follow-up team has demonstrated an increased awareness of peace and nonviolence and a proclivity for leadership in their peer circles. For example, Casey reports that while she was involved with training for teen forum during the institute, her involvement with the institute has impacted her in a different way. She states, "another thing from this institute, not just nonviolence, but leadership. And I think that's (leadership) an important part of saying no, so I use what I learned here (in teen forum)." Carrie has gone beyond the superficial veneer of nonviolence and is practicing peace in the truest sense of the word. Instead of merely severing ties with her former friends and going about her own life, she has extended the hand of compassion and is attempting to help them. And Junior is calling for trust and unity in his immediate community, while empowering others to do the same by being part of the support group in his school. One of his friends was shot and killed about 6 months after the Institute. Junior played a key role in school, helping people grieve publicly over the death of an innocent youth. His interview on

a local radio station that is popular with youth his age dealt with this incident and about why he wants to be a peacemaker.

Conclusion

According to the Carnegie Council, these successes are exactly what any program can hope to achieve for this age group. They conclude that social support groups and life skills curricula which emphasize safety and the prevention of violence, including discouraging drug dealing and the carrying of weapons can provide powerful leverage in the promotion of health among adolescents. "The vitality of any society and the prospects for its future depend in the long run on the quality of its people, on their knowledge, skill, and opportunities, as well as on the decency of their human and social relations" (1995, p. 135).

Success can be measured by the participant's own evaluations of the institute. The positive results in Table II show that even after one week that the youth had learned some important peacebuilding skills. These findings were confirmed in the parent observations recorded in Table III. It is assumed that further work with a group of young people could strengthen their commitment to nonviolence. The volunteer staff of the UWM Summer Institute Nonviolence has written several grants and hopes to raise enough money to employ these students in future summer institutes.

It is clear that the first year of the UWM Summer Institute on Nonviolence was successful within the context of its stated goals. While minor improvements are required regarding the depth and breadth of the curriculum and frequency of the activities, the basic information and concepts are sound, valuable and inspiring. This unique Institute is an

important alternative to the more traditional methods schools have used to educate their students in the techniques of nonviolence and peaceful philosophies and should be used in tandem with more formal school based curricula. It empowers students to become leaders within their peer community and encourages them to become creative problem solvers with the ability to choose peaceful alternatives to violence. Ideally, schools in Milwaukee would send representatives from each middle school grade to participate in the institute in an effort to create a network of adolescents who are well versed in nonviolent conflict resolution and peacemaking. This would create in Milwaukee a cadre of youth peacemakers akin to Mohandas Gandhi's concept of a Shenti Sena, or nonviolent brigades who would go out into areas of conflict and help reduce levels of violence. In the long run, what matters most is the effort to reach teenagers and provide them with positive nonviolent role models. The Institute was an ambitious project well worth the effort put forth. It was effective and was able to accomplish its initial goals. Monica wrote:

> There are many things that I have learned these couple of days. And I appreciate all the people who made it happen. I was never this much concerned with violence. I mean, I thought about it, but not this much. I hope this experience helps me in the future, on the streets, or everywhere I happen to be.

Casey thought that the Institute was fun and she expressed excitement about it because, "I feel we are going to make a difference."

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ENDNOTES

1. The students' names used throughout this paper are pseudonyms.

2. The keynote speaker at this conference was Dr. Christine King Ferris, the sister of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Ferris is a professor of Education at Spelman College.

3. **Dating Bill of Rights**

Each individual has the ...
The right to get out.

The right to be respected.

The right to know when something is wrong.

The right to honesty.

The right to freedom and privacy.

The right to your own opinions.

The right to say "no" and have it respected.

4. PEACE TREATY

Raise your hand when you want to talk (except when brainstorming)
Respect one another and everyone's ideas
Let people speak their minds
Use put ups
Act peacefully
Keep time

This treaty was designed and signed by all participants prior to leaving the Institute on the first day.